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LB 647

(Read title.) Bill was introduced on January 16 of last year; at that time referred to the Education Committee. The bill was advanced to General File. I do have Education Committee amendments, Mr. President. (AM2438, Legislative Journal page 422.)

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: Senator Stuhr, you're recognized to open on the bill.

SENATOR STUHR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and members of the body. I am bringing this bill that has actually been reduced so that it has only the main object of looking at the election of at-large members on the educational service units. This change in statue (sic--statute) has been recommended by the Secretary of State Office. We would like to have this change for clarification before the general election in November. It was and is a bit complicated, but I think for clarity you are receiving a handout sheet and I will try to explain it briefly. Currently, educational service units have elected boards that consist of at-large members and county members. There are four at-large representatives for each ESU board, but no more than two at-large representatives can be from the same county unless the educational service unit consists of only one county. If more than two of the four candidates are from the same county, the practice has been to eliminate the third candidate from such county and elect the candidate in fifth place, even though they may have received a lower percentage of votes, and we're talking about that fifth place person. This bill states that if no more than two of the four candidates who receive the highest number of votes live in the same county, the two candidates from such county receiving the highest number of votes will be elected at-large representatives. The remaining candidates from such county shall not be elected and a vacancy will exist. It is important for this change to be made this year because at-large members are elected during gubernatorial cycles, which is the election occurring this fall. Again, this is for clarification in the statue (sic) and there's been confusion because at one time ESUs were very strictly one county, one county and one county. Now school districts, because of consolidations, sometimes consist of neighboring counties. You all have, those particularly in the rural areas, have experienced that. So I am